

## MIGRATION, ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE CHANGE IN THE EAST, HORN AND SOUTHERN AFRICA REGION

[The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change 6<sup>th</sup> Assessment Report](#) (IPCC AR 6) highlights that **people are already moving across the planet, because of the adverse effects of climate change, environmental degradation, and disasters due to increasing natural hazards.**

### ① How climate change and human mobility interact in the East, Horn and South of Africa?

The **increasing frequency of droughts, rainfall variability** and resultant flooding in the region, declines the productivity of agriculture, increases water scarcity and depletion of biodiversity, causing food insecurity, loss of life, and drives human mobility. **The numbers of climate change induced displacements are projected to increase** in the coming decade, and beyond.

- The decisions to migrate in the context of climate change can span extended periods such as in the case of **slow-onset environmental degradation** that reduces crop yields over multiple seasons, leading to eroding incomes.
- **Sudden-onset events** force immediate decisions to flee, such as in cases of displacement due to floods.
- However, environmental degradation and natural hazards rarely act in isolation. **Human mobility is driven by multiple and interrelated factors: economic, political and socio-cultural.**

**Migratory flows can also have adverse effects on the environment**, particularly when migrants or displaced persons are not supported with access to renewable energy sources or sustainable livelihood options.

**Conflicts and climate-induced mobility are similarly interrelated.** Conflicts can compel people to seek refuge in areas less affected by conflict but more prone to natural hazards, while human and livestock mobility can also result in clashes.

*In summary, climate change intensifies environmental hazards, prompting human mobility. Both gradual degradation and sudden disasters drive migration, influenced by socioeconomic factors, and without support, migration can strain environments and exacerbate conflicts.*

**What are the different forms of climate mobility and how does it impact people?**

While some people choose to move, others move because they have no other choice, as moving away from a disaster zone can be lifesaving. However, for many more, especially those in vulnerable and socially marginalized groups, **migrating will not be an option because** it requires opportunities as well as economic and other resources that they do not have.

The impacts are felt differently by different age groups, as well as women and men, girls and boys according to their social and political contexts and the gendered dimension of migration must be taken into account. Climate change-driven movements of humans and livestock result in different migratory outcomes and experiences.

- **Disaster displacement** is typically temporary and internal but can become protracted . Whilst typically internal, in border areas, displacement can be across borders. Displacement often increases vulnerability as displaced persons may lose all their belongings including critical documents such as ID and land ownership documents. They may lose their livelihoods permanently and they are often displaced to areas that are climate fragile and where no basic services are provided.
- **Rural urban migration** is a growing trend as the impact of climate change in the rural areas is intensified by existing socio-economic inequalities relating to income levels and quality of education, health care, and infrastructure, thereby attracting movements to urban areas.
- **Regular and irregular labour migration** is another key feature of the regional human mobility landscape, particularly in relation to losses in nature-based livelihoods. Exact data that determines the extent to which it is influenced by environmental degradation and the impacts of climate change is difficult to obtain as the data is often coded as economic movements rather than climate mobility. Porous borders and informal livelihoods also make it difficult to collect data particularly on irregular labour migration.
- **Seasonal migration** is often related to nature-based livelihoods. A typical example are the pastoral communities as they move with their livestock mainly to access water and pasture. But similar to labour migration, seasonal migration is difficult to quantify.

*In summary, climate-induced mobility is context and individual-specific. Some move by choice, some are forced to move, while others lack options to move due to limited resources. Movements range from temporary to long-term and from internal to cross-border. Rural-urban migration is projected to grow and labour and seasonal migration are likely to be intensified due to the growing intensity of climate impacts and other factors such as socio-economic disparities.*

Key migration figures in the EHoA region		
<p>Internally Displaced Persons</p> <p><b>2.4 million</b></p> <p>Displaced by disasters as of 2022.</p>	<p>Drought affected</p> <p><b>32.1 million</b></p> <p>As of June 2023.</p>	<p>Flood affected</p> <p><b>3.5 million</b></p> <p>As of November 2023.</p>
<p>Newly displaced by floods</p> <p><b>1.9 million</b></p> <p>As of November 2023.</p>	<p>International migrants</p> <p><b>+ 7.6 million</b></p> <p>As of July 2020.</p>	<p>Refugees and asylum seekers</p> <p><b>5.95 million</b></p> <p>As of 28 January 2024.</p>
<p>Migrant workers</p> <p><b>3.6 million</b></p> <p>As of 2019.</p>	<p>Inward remittances</p> <p><b>USD 12.3 billion</b></p> <p>As of 2022.</p>	<p>Emigrants</p> <p>Most emigrants move within the region. Top 3 diaspora countries outside EHoA are the United States, Saudi Arabia, and the United Kingdom</p>